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ABSTRACT

An approach to teaching grammar through the use of speaking and listening activities is presented in this brief article. AUTHOR'S COMMENT (excerpt): Why practice the language simply by completing worksheets or exercises in the grammar book? There are various ways to teach language through speaking and listening exercises. These are several suggestions you may find useful in the classroom. They are directed toward the students, and are therefore written as activities for them to perform. ACTIVITIES: Three activities are described. The first, a punctuation activity, is based on a system of sounds which represent specific symbols. For example, a whistle might represent an exclamation point. The second, a pronunciation activity, is based on making a list of words which sound alike, but in which junctures occur in different places. For example, "ice cream" and "I scream." The third, another pronunciation activity, is based on pictures which depict people or objects with identical names. For example a "lighthousekeeper" is an occupation and a "light housekeeper" does light housework. It is suggested that with imaginative activities, not only can students improve their speaking and listening skills, but also enjoy themselves. (KC)

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Do You Hear What I Hear?

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Level:

General

Author's Comment:

Why practice the language simply by completing worksheets or exercises in the grammar book? There are various ways to teach language through speaking and listening exercises. These are several suggestions you may find useful in the classroom. They are directed toward the students, and are therefore written as activities for them to perform.

Activities:

Punctuation Activity

Have the students do the following:

1. Listen to Victor Borge's comedy routine, *Caught in the Act.* He produces certain sounds to represent specific punctuation symbols. This record can be ordered from any record shop.
2. Divide into groups of five, choose a two or three paragraph text or read a prepared text without punctuation added.
3. Decide whether the text is punctuated correctly or where the punctuation marks should be.
4. Plan a system of punctuation with sounds that represent specific symbols. For example, a whistle might represent an exclamation mark.
5. Present the text to the class. Each student in the group may represent several symbols. For example, one individual may produce the sounds for the period, comma, and quotation marks.

e. g. period ..... Plop
comma ..... snap fingers
quotation marks ..... two short claps

6. As a class, decide if the text was punctuated properly and which sounds represented which symbols.

Materials:

Victor Borge's album, *Caught in the Act*
Text without punctuation or several short selections

B. Pronunciation Activity

Have the students do the following:

1. Divide into groups of three and make a list of words which sound alike, but in which the junctures occur in different places.

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2. Recite the list of words and have the rest of the class write them.

e.g. announce.....an ounce
ice cream.....I scream
alike.....a like

3. Write the correct words on the board and ask the other students to check their papers. Did everyone hear you correctly?

Materials:
List of words
Blackboard and chalk

C. Pronunciation Activity
Have the students do the following:

1. Draw or cut out pictures which deiict people or objects with identical names.
2. Write the answer of what is depicted on the back of the picture.

e.g. lighthousekeeper .....(occupation)
light housekeeper .....(does light housework)
White House .....(Presidential home)
White house.....(shade of the house)
old White house .....(name of the people who live in the house)
blackbird .....(species of bird)
black bird .....(shade of bird)

3. Ask the students to name what is depicted verbally. What is different about the pronunciation? How can a listener tell the difference?
4. Read a list of sentences or sentence pairs and ask the students to explain the difference in their meaning.

e.g. The old White house is not really a white house.
The principal's voice boomed over the loudspeaker.
The principal is a loud speaker.

Materials:
Magazines or drawing paper
Scissors
List of sentences and/or sentence pairs

With imaginative activities, not only can students improve their speaking and listening skills, but also enjoy themselves.